DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 442 493 JC 000 416

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TITLE	Policy, Pedagogy, and Social Inequality: Community College Student Realities in Post-Industrial America. Critical Studies in Education and Culture Series.
ISBN	ISBN-0-89789-593-2
ISSN	ISSN-1064-8615
PUB DATE	1998-00-00
NOTE	160p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Bergin & Garvey, Greenwood Publishing Group, 88 Post Road West, Box 5007, Westport, CT 06881 ($49.95). Tel: 800-225-5800 (Toll Free).
PUB TYPE	Books (010) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	*College Role; *Community Colleges; *Educational Change; Educational Research; Educational Theories; Higher Education; Instruction; *Nontraditional Students; *Student Needs; *Two Year College Students; Two Year Colleges; Womens Education

ABSTRACT

This book examines the role of the community college in higher education from the perspective of a "critical lover." The introduction provides a profile of the community college and contextualizes the "controversiality" of its social role. Chapter 1 identifies the community college as a key player in higher education reform and outlines the Clinton Administration's major proposals and philosophy. It discusses the impact of these reforms on the community college's large nontraditional student population. Chapter 2 situates the community college within an ideological battleground of negative public imagery and political vulnerability and shows how students, especially returning women, are affected. A theoretical and methodological repositioning occurs in the chapter. It discusses insights from critical educational theory, critical pedagogy, and classroom research to provide a framework for insider research. Chapter 3 identifies the site of the research and addresses methodological practices. It informs the reader of the author's Brazilian living and teaching experiences and how this background influences her work. Chapter 4 describes the community college culture and documents students' everyday lives and educational experiences. Chapter 5 addresses the experiment of applying the insights of critical educational theory and pedagogy in sociology courses. It discusses how she grounded the theory and reports student reactions. Chapter 6 outlines the feminist tenets that served as the framework for the classroom outside the classroom and records the perspectives of community college returning women students in the group. Chapter 7 returns to macro-sociological analysis. It discusses the ways in which the community college can better serve student needs both structurally and instructionally. The chapter coins the concept of "critical mainstreaming" as a way that this can be accomplished. (Contains 195 references.) (VWC)

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